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ABSTRACT

This newsletter discusses the teaching and role of English around the world. Articles also cover English-language media in a given country, and the opportunity and need for understanding and speaking English in that country. This particular issue contains items on English-language education and use in India. (VM)

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Number 4 May, 1971

ENGLISH AROUND THE WORLD

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ENGLISH IN INDIA A PAN-INDIAN AND INTERNATIONAL LINK

by BRAJ B. KACHRU

[*For a note on Professor Kachru see the end of this article.*]

The history of the English language on the Indian subcontinent is closely linked with the colonization of the region by the British. In the beginning English was used essentially as a restricted language for the purpose of business and administration, and it functioned more or less in the same way as Persian did during the Mughal period (up to 1838) in the north of India.

After many historical vicissitudes the English language has by and large been adopted in India as a national *link* language and as the main medium of international communication. In its history of about two centuries the English language has been used as a linguistic tool against the British regime and as the main language of political awakening and national unity. In the process this "alien" language has become an intrinsic part of the Indian linguistic setting and has resulted in a "variety" of English which is of two-fold interest. First, a significant body of Indian writing in English has developed in different literary forms (e.g. essays, fiction, poetry) which is now considered an important component of Commonwealth writing in English (more on this subject later on). Second, a distinctly *Indian* variety of English has emerged with typically Indian characteristics in the pluralistic culture and multilinguistic context of the Indian subcontinent (see references on the subject in the bibliography at the end of this article).

A word as to the Indian linguistic setting. India is generally presented as a linguistic paradise with a variety of languages and dialects. It is claimed that language planning in India becomes difficult due to language diversity and language pressure groups. In a restricted sense this generalization is true. The four main language families of India are: Indo-Aryan, Dravidian, Austric, and Sino-Tibetan. The Indian Constitution in its Eighth Schedule recognizes fifteen

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THE CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH AT HYDERABAD

The reader who has seen Professor Kachru's remarks on "English in India" in this issue—and who may recall our article on the Regional English Language Centre in Singapore (*EAW*, May 1970)—might be interested to know that there exists a highly specialized "Central Institute of English" at Hyderabad, a city of over a million population in south central India. The Director of the Institute, Dr. Ramesh Mohan, has spent the past school year in the United States, where he has lectured as visiting professor at the University of Illinois both in the Division of English as a Second Language and in the Department of Linguistics. He has been good enough to assemble for us a few facts about the Institute, from which we have selected the following for publication.

The Central Institute of English, Hyderabad, is an autonomous Institute, set up by the Government of India in November, 1958 to improve the teaching of English in India, both through organization of research in the teaching of this subject and the training of teachers in the most suitable techniques.

The Institute is wholly financed by the Government of India for its maintenance. The Ford Foundation assisted it till July 1970 by grants for books, equipment, feliowships for study abroad, visiting faculty, assistance to regional English Language Teaching Institutes. The British Council has been assisting it by providing two posts at the Institute.

The Institute is situated on a thirty-acre campus near the Osmania University College of Arts and Commerce. Its buildings include an academic and administrative block, a hostel for men and women, the Director's residence and some residential quarters for academic and non-teaching staff. A separate hostel for women and an auditorium are nearing completion. The Institute library, with a collection of about 12,000 volumes, occupies a spacious wing in the academic and administrative block.

The academic staff consists of six Professors (including one Visiting Professor from the British

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languages as "national" languages, and Hindi in the *devanāgari* script (an alphabetical script used for writing some South Asian languages) as the "official" language.

Among the "national" languages, Hindi can boast the largest number of speakers with over 133 million. Bengali has about 33 million, as does Marathi. Telugu and Tamil, both spoken in the south, have respectively 37 million and 30 million. Other "national" languages are, alphabetically listed, Assamese, Gujarati, Kannada, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, and Urdu.

In addition to these languages there are also 16 languages which have more than 500,000 speakers and 19 others whose speakers number from 100,000 to 500,000 (See *India 1969*, Publication Division, Government of India, Delhi, pp. 15-16).

Since 1947 the language policy of India and the place of English in the Indian educational system has been conditioned by political pressures and the regional and/or national political climate. In this rather unsettled period of over two decades English has retained its position as the national *link* language and as the medium of higher education. On December 16, 1967 an Official Languages (Amendment) Act was passed by the Lok Sobha (Lower House of the Indian Parliament) according to which "English shall be used for purposes of communication between the Union and a state which has not adopted Hindi as its official language and where Hindi is used for purposes of communication between one state to another which has not adopted Hindi as its official language, such communication in Hindi shall be accompanied by a translation of the same in English." (See *India 1969*, pp. 25-26.) This Act, then, gave English the status of an associate official language.

It might be useful to present here a summary of the history of English in India. On December 31, 1600, Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to a few merchants of the City of London giving them a monopoly of trade with India and the East. In a very restricted sense this Charter initiated bilingualism in English in India. Note, however, that in the beginning, interest in learning English was restricted to a very few Indians who were closely connected with the British traders.

This initial economic and political contact of the East India Company eventually resulted in establishing a firm political base in India. There are three earlier phases which are crucial for the study of the history of the English language in India. The first phase comprises the efforts of missionaries who believed that:

"The true curse of darkness is the introduction of light. The Hindoos (sic) err, because they are ignorant and their errors have never fairly been laid before them. The communication of our light and knowledge to them, would prove the best remedy for their disorders." (Kachru, 1969, p. 630.)

In 1813 with the efforts of Charles Grant, William Wilberforce, the Foreign Secretary, and Lord Castlereagh, the House of Commons in its 13th Resolution resolved:

". . . that it is the opinion of this Committee that it is the duty of this country to promote the interests and happiness of the native inhabitants of the British dominions in India, and that measures ought to be introduced as may tend to the introduction among them of useful knowledge, and of religious and moral improvement. That in furtherance of the above objects sufficient facilities shall be afforded by law to persons desirous of going to, or remaining in, India." (Kachru, 1969, p. 630.) This then revitalized, and firmly established the missionary work in India. In their proselytizing activities the missionaries used English-oriented education as the major tool.

Second, a very influential group of Indians was impressed with the scientific progress of the West and desired to use English as a tool for imparting scientific knowledge to young Indians. In this context it is customary to refer to Raja Rammohan Roy's letter to Lord Amherst, dated December 11, 1823. The main desire of a rather small but powerful group was to initiate scientific education in India in which the English government could help by:

". . . employing European gentlemen of talents and education to instruct the natives of India in mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, and other useful sciences, which the natives of Europe have carried to a degree of perfection that has raised them above the inhabitants of other parts of the world."

In addition to Raja Rammohan Roy, the name of Raghunath Hari Navalkar of Jhansi (about 1770) is also mentioned among the Indians who realized the value of the English language and western education.

The third phase began after 1765, when the East Indian Company became more or less stabilized as a political power in India. At that time there were two attitudes toward introducing English on the Indian subcontinent. The group that was in support of English was led by Charles Grant, Lord Moira, and T. B. Macaulay. The second group was led by Hon. H. T. Princep, who was against the use of English as a compulsory language. In spite of the dissenting Minute of Princep, the highly controversial and very significant Minute of Macaulay was passed February 2, 1835. Macauley, as he says, aimed at forming a subculture in India:

". . . a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, a class of persons, Indians in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect." (Kachru 1969, p. 633.) The Minute got a Seal of Approval from Lord William Bentinck, and finally on March 7, 1835, an official resolution endorsing Macaulay's policy was passed. This was the cornerstone of bilingualism in English in India.

It was during the British *raj* (1765-1947) that English was firmly established in India as the medium of instruction and administration. In 1857 three uni-

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Council), six Lecturers and a Program Assistant.

The Institute offers a number of academic courses for teachers of English from universities and colleges, training colleges, technological institutions and defence academies (the minimum qualification for admission to these courses is a Master's degree in English). These aim at producing specialists in the teaching of English language and literature at university and secondary levels.

It operates at the center of a number of institutions engaged in the English language teaching field—universities and professional institutions—assisting and coordinating their activities in the domain of training, research and production of materials, to meet the big challenge that India faces in this area.

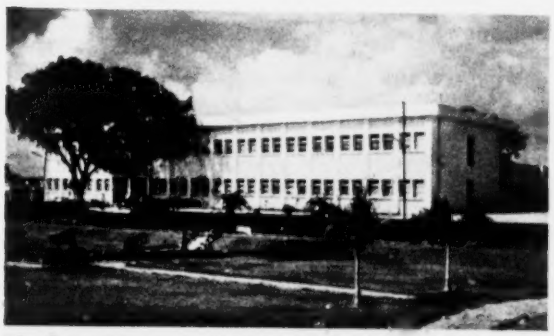
The total number of places available in these courses is 60. Teachers in service are admitted on the recommendation of universities and State Departments of Education, and are paid a stipend of 150 rupees per month for the duration of the course in addition to travel expenses. The University Grants Commission offers twelve fellowships to universities for the training of their teachers at the C.I.E.

Besides the regular courses, short summer courses of four to six weeks duration are regularly organised for university and college teachers and other special groups of teachers, such as advanced courses in linguistics and phonetics; courses for teacher-trainers; special courses for foreign students. The number of teachers from all over the country, trained by the Institute so far, is 1,300.

The Institute has been recognized as a center for research by a number of Indian universities. Among the important projects undertaken so far is one which deals with Contrastive Linguistic Studies: English and regional languages (for example, Hindi-English or Tamil-English).

The Institute has two language laboratories and a well-equipped Radio Unit. Radio lessons for schools are prepared at the Institute and broadcast three times a week by All India Radio, Hyderabad.

The Central Institute of English now occupies a key position in the field of English studies in India. It has been recognised by the University Departments of English and the University Grants Commission for its pioneering efforts in the improvement of the standard of English teaching and research in India.



The Central Institute of English, Hyderabad, India

ENGLISH WITHOUT CLOTHES —ALMOST

During a recent visit to London we were privileged to observe a unique phenomenon, the English Teaching Theatre, which combines entertainment with practice in colloquial spoken English.

The theater is located in Chenies Mews, in the middle of the city, in a small auditorium which is known as the Magic Circle since it is normally a meeting place for professional conjurers. Here, every Tuesday evening at 7:30, sketches are performed and songs sung by a group of professional actors, some of them recruited from the Royal Shakespeare Company. The audience consists of foreign students of English who pay six shillings apiece for seats.

By and large, the theatre is the inspiration of John Haycraft, Principal of International House, "a private trust with headquarters in London which runs language teaching institutes in many parts of the world." Financial support is provided in part by BBC, the British Broadcasting Corporation.

To quote from an official description, "the English Teaching Theatre aims to use the techniques and resources of the theatre to fix English structures, intonation patterns, expressions and idioms, in the learners' minds." Each sketch and each song has been especially written to demonstrate a point of grammar or pronunciation in English. At the end of each sketch—or sometimes in the middle—the audience is encouraged to repeat certain lines or answer certain questions by the Master of Ceremonies.

The evening we were present the material was indeed varied. There was a scene involving two lovers and a photographer, another set in a typical English breakfast room, a sketch in a police station, and an hilariously amusing number about a girl with double vision visiting an oculist's office.

However the item which caused the greatest sensation—and which brought newspaper reporters and photographers to Chenies Mews—was a partial striptease performed by a girl named Fifi. The audience responded enthusiastically. "What is Fifi doing now?" barked out the Master of Ceremonies, "Fifi is taking off her dress." "Fifi is taking off her dress," replied his listeners obediently. This, of course, was a drill on the use of the present progressive in English. And, a moment later, to illustrate the past perfect "What *has* Fifi done? Fifi *has* taken off her dress."

This was as far as Fifi went, but not as far as publicity went. The next day—so a friend at BBC informed us in a letter—the switchboard at her office was swamped with calls from people eager to know whether the British Broadcasting Corporation had gone in for pornography on the grand scale, and obviously disappointed to discover that such was not the case.

It is our understanding that Mr. Haycraft plans to take the English Teaching Theatre elsewhere in Europe, perhaps to Paris, and that he has even thought of the United States. In the opinion of the editors, a similar theatre would be a worthy addition to the New York scene.

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versities were established in India (viz. Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras), and by the end of the century two more universities were added, i.e. Punjab (Lahore) and Allahabad. An influential English press had come into existence by 1928, and a serious reading public for English newspapers and other forms of literature had emerged. The statistics for publication in 1928 show that English publications (240) were numerically the fourth largest out of the ten language categories. The first three in rank were Marathi (677), Gujarati (506), and Sindhi (346).

During this period there was a serious increase in the number of educational institutions both in the urban and rural areas. With the diffusion of education, English spread among the middle and lower classes of Indian society.

The bilingualism in English has had two types of impact on the Indian languages. First, there has been a substantial linguistic impact on the vocabulary of a majority of Indian languages, which has helped in developing specialized sublanguages ("registers"). For example, it is claimed that Telugu has borrowed "at least 3000 English words." (Kachru, 1969, p. 661.) In Hindi and Bengali, to mention only two languages of India, there has been serious influence both in formal terms and in terms of *content*. The impact of English can also be traced on the syntax of the major Indian languages.

Secondly, the study of English literature has introduced new literary genres (Kachru 1969, pp. 654-59). Consider for example, Gokak's observation: "It is no exaggeration to say that it was in the English classroom that the Indian literary renaissance was born." Note, in addition, the following comment of Walatara about the impact of English on Sinhalese:

"In Ceylon the contact with English has revitalized Sinhalese literature. New genres have appeared in Sinhalese—the novel and the short story . . . not only have Sinhalese writers imitated these foreign novels, but they have even absorbed their influence and produced something on their own . . . Sinhalese drama has thriven (sic) in English and Western models."

In India the English language has blended with the cultural and social matrix of the country and, as Raja Rao, the well-known Indian English writer says, it has become the language of the "intellectual make up" of Indians. The typically Indian uses and contexts have made English in this area more deeply culture-bound that Persian was in the times of Muslim rulers.

The linguistic implications of such acculturization of Indian English are that the more culture-bound it becomes the more *distance* is created between Indian English and other varieties of English (e.g. American English, Australian English, or British English). This then has serious implications on the "intelligibility" between Indian English and other varieties of English.

The *Indianness* in Indian English is reflected at all the linguistic levels (e.g. phonological), morphological, syntactic, semantic, and lexical). In some earlier studies on various linguistic aspects of Indian English it has been shown that standard Indian English has a distinct phonological structure and has its own marked Indian features in syntax, semantics, and lexis (Bansal 1969; bibliography in Kachru 1969, pp. 669-78).

This brings us into a field which is of more interest to the professional linguist than to the general reader, and to which we could scarcely do justice within our limitations of space. I would refer the student of languages to some specialized studies on the subject, listed in the attached bibliography. Let us turn for a moment to the matter of Indian English literature.

The English language is perhaps unique in the sense that in the last three or four decades a considerable body of creative writing has developed in it which is written by those who are non-native "users" of the language. This has resulted in West African English literature, Filipino English literature, and Indian English literature. These literatures are regional not only in a geographical sense, but also in their content and form (Iyengar 1962; Kachru 1969, pp. 654-59; McCutchion 1968).

Indian English writing has developed in various literary forms (fiction, poetry, essays). It has now been recognized as a distinct body of Commonwealth writing in English. This has put Indian English writing—slowly, but definitely—in an international literary setting.

It is only since World War II that Indian writing in English has been taken seriously by the English speaking world. In the 1930's Bhupal Singh (1934, p. 306) commented:

"Indian writers and story-tellers on the whole do not compare favourably with Anglo-Indian writers. That they write in a foreign tongue is a serious handicap in itself. Then few of them possess any knowledge of the art of fiction. . . . In plot construction they are weak, and in characterization weaker still." This assessment was made much before M. R. Anand, R. K. Narayan, Kamala Markandaya, Raja Rao, and others established themselves as Indian English fiction writers.

The following comments of Gokak (1964, p. 162) present a recent attitude toward Indian English writers:

"Indo-Anglican writing is direct and spontaneous, —like creative writing in any other language. It is conditioned in many ways by the peculiar circumstances of its birth and growth . . . Gordon Bottomley is said to have described typically Indo-Anglican poetry as 'Matthew Arnold in *Sari*.' He should rather have referred to it as Shakuntala in skirts."

The Indian writing in English comprises an important part of the literary heritage of the Indian subcontinent and it is as crucial as the regional literatures of India for the understanding of the contemporary literary traditions of India. Iyengar (1962, p. 3) asks: "How shall we describe Indian creative writing in English?" and answers: "Of course, it is Indian literature, even as the works of Thoreau

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ENGLISH IN INDIA *(from page 4)*

or Hemingway are American literature. But Indian literature comprises several literatures . . . and Indian writing in English is but only one of the voices in which India speaks. It is a new voice, no doubt, but it is as much Indian as others."

(A detailed treatment of Indian English literature can be found in the following works, among others: Derrett, 1966; Gokak, 1970; Iyengar, 1943 and 1962; Lal and Rao, 1959; McCutchion, 1968; Naik *et al.*, 1968; Narasimhaiah, 1967.)

In current language planning in India there are various currents, political, religious, and socio-cultural, which determine the attitude toward the position of English in India. The motivations for these attitudes are very rarely educational or academic. The political and regional pressure groups and language loyalty play a very crucial role.

The main questions which India faces are: First, what should be the place of English *vis-a-vis* the regional languages in early education and higher education? Second, what is the role of Hindi and/or English in higher education? Third, and linguistically perhaps very pertinent, what *variety* of English should be accepted as the "model" for teaching? The answers to these questions are very difficult to find, as even after about two decades of independence the Indian leaders, educationists, and academic administrators have found it wise to avoid facing the problem in any serious sense. The position of English in the educational system in different states varies from state to state, and currently there is no uniform policy for higher education.

The *three language formula* has been proposed by the present central government. It involves learning three languages, namely, the regional language, Hindi, and English. The so-called Hindi-speaking area, according to this formula is expected to encourage the study of a Dravidian language from the south of the country. This formula has not been accepted by all the states of India.

The current publications, both political and non-political, show that there are at least the following groups with distinct attitudes toward the role of English: (1) The Central Ministry of Education (their policies are not always acceptable to the state ministries of Education); (2) Indian English writers; (3) Anti-English groups (either pro-Hindi or pro-regional languages); (4) English-knowing elite who are pro-English.

In spite of the present confusion about the future of English in the Indian educational system English currently continues to play an important role. Let us consider below the role of English in the Indian press and the Indian publishing industry.

In 1968, newspapers in English had the largest circulation of 60.02 lakh out of a total circulation of 234.57 (a lakh is the Indian expression for 100,000). After English came Hindi with a circulation of 43.59 lakhs. The largest number of newspapers are published in Hindi (2,381) and English is a close second with 2,074.

The following table shows language and periodicity-wise circulation of newspapers in 1968:

Language	Dailies*	Weeklies	Others	Total
English	1,877	912	3,213	6,002
Hindi	1,009	1,346	2,004	4,359
Assamese	26	54	16	96
Bengali	482	292	515	1,289
Gujarati	569	461	565	1,595
Kannada	222	193	191	606
Malayalam	741	455	604	1,800
Marathi	683	313	557	1,553
Oriya	67	29	54	150
Punjabi	48	147	148	343
Sanskrit	—	—	11	11
Sindhi	19	56	40	115
Tamil	777	1,064	783	2,624
Telugu	178	360	467	951
Urdu	320	311	416	1,047
Bilingual	12	147	528	687
Multilingual	1	46	105	152
Others	10	21	46	77
Total	7,041	6,153	10,263	23,457

*Includes tri- and bi-weeklies.
(See *India 1969*, Publications Division, Government of India, Delhi 1969, p. 142.)

The next table shows the importance of English publications in the Indian publishing industry (see Ray 1969, p. 121).

Relative Shares of Books Published

Year	English	Hindi	Marathi	Gujarati	Tamil	Bengali	Total
1957	40.3	17.5	5.4	4.9	6.7	7.2	100
1964	51.2	12.8	8.6	5.6	3.3	5.8	100

Increase in percent of relative shares:

+25 −37 +59 +14 −51 −26

English continues as the language of administration and higher education and of pan-Indian creative writing.

In India English is the widely taught second language at practically all levels of education. All the Indian universities, graduate colleges, and junior colleges have separate departments for the teaching of English. But unfortunately in these departments a majority of students get no serious exposure to English as a living language. Their appreciation of the classics of English—often taught to a dazed class—is very superficial. The teachers are not trained at all in the basic methodology of teaching languages or in teaching the structure of English. This has created a serious pedagogical and educational problem.

The English departments and professors of English continue to believe that teaching literature is "prestigious." The result is that there is a large number of teachers of literature with no enthusiasm for language teaching. The textbooks and teaching techniques are outdated and often not relevant to the Indian context or appropriate to the future needs of a student.

A small group of scholars and educationists has realized the problem. After serious deliberation a Central Institute of English was set up in Hyderabad in 1958. (See-a note on it elsewhere in this issue.) The announcement of the Institute reads as follows:

"Whereas, considering the falling standards of

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English in India, especially at the secondary stage of education, it is deemed necessary to take steps to improve the teaching of English, both through organization of research in the teaching of this subject and the training of teachers in the most suitable techniques. . . ."

Some of the education ministries of different States of India have also started regional institutes of English which function in close cooperation with the Central Institute of English.

The approach to the teaching of English is becoming increasingly more realistic and the professors of English and academic administrators are slowly realizing that there is a pressing need: (1) to develop "register-oriented" teaching materials in English suitable to the Indian educational system; (2) to train teachers of English at all levels in contemporary methods of language teaching and in the different branches of the linguistic sciences; (3) to reorganize graduate and undergraduate programs in English both in literature and language (it is often claimed—and not wrongly—that for the Indian departments of English literature, English literature ends with the 19th century!); (4) to reduce the dichotomy between literature-oriented and language-oriented faculties; (5) to develop a realistic attitude toward teaching English "literature" in India; and above all, (6) to initiate debate and cooperation among literary scholars and language specialists in Indian universities so that Indian scholars themselves can give some theoretical foundations to the teaching of English and also make it goal-oriented and significant to Indian linguistic, cultural, and educational settings.

The new *Indian* approach to the teaching of English has to be relevant to the needs of the students at different levels in the Indian educational system (Mohan, mimeographed).

It is also being realized that the training centers for the teaching of English as a foreign (or second) language in the English-speaking countries (America or Britain) are unable and ill-equipped to understand the problems of the non-English speaking areas of Asia. Their current programs, therefore, have no serious relevance to these countries. There is also cynicism about the academic content and theoretical foundations of such western programs.

The future of English in India cannot be separated from the national and regional politics of India. A large number of national and regional political and ethnic groups—both pro-English and anti-English—are using it as a tool to achieve their ends. But in spite of the present confusion, English will continue in an *Indian* variety in the Indian subcontinent. In the foreseeable years it is difficult to imagine India's replacing *Indian* English as a link language. Over the years, the English language in India might develop into a pidginized form, not intelligible to native speakers of English. That will perhaps present another example of the power of assimilation and *Indianization* in Indian culture. Perhaps that is unavoidable since Indian English is used essentially as an *Indian* language to keep the Indian subcontinent together, to make the Indian educational system work, to keep the Indian scientists and technologists abreast of contemporary knowledge, and to preserve academic and administrative mobility in this vast multilingual country. In this context the following observation of Mulk Raj Anand (1969, p. 285) is significant:

> "If then the English I am recommending is not the King Emperors' English, the Queen's English, or the Commonwealth English, or the American English, but our own pidgin Indian, then let us genuinely accept it as one of the languages of India recognized by our Constitution. You may find that this will remain a most useful and sensitive medium in the future. . . ."

In this brief note I have attempted to present the role of English in India in a historical perspective, and to suggest the process of the *Indianization* of the English language. In the past history of about 200 years the English language in India has significantly contributed to the languages of the subcontinent both from a linguistic and from a literary point of view. In turn, the Indian linguistic and socio-cultural setting has also left a mark on the English language. The result of this linguistic and cultural contact has been the growth of a living Indian variety of English.

Those who would like to study this subject further are referred to a bibliography given below, which follows a short note on Dr. Kachru himself.

Braj B. Kachru (1932-) is Professor and Head, Department of Linguistics, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He was born in Kashmir, India, and graduated from Edinburgh University, Scotland. He has visited Ceylon, Nepal, and other areas of South Asia in connection with his research on the non-native varieties of English. He was chairman of the Committee on Regional Varieties of English of the Association Commonwealth Literature and Language, Brisbane, Australia (1968). In 1961-62 he initiated a program of applied linguistics in the Department of English, Lucknow University, India. He was a consultant for "The Random House Dictionary of the English Language." In 1958-60 he was a British Council Fellow in the United Kingdom, and in 1967-68 he held a Faculty Research Fellowship of the American Institute of Indian Studies. Professor Kachru has served on many committees on the teaching of English in India and in the U.S.A. and has published a number of articles on his research in professional journals.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:

I appreciate your sending me the initial numbers of your new publication *English Around The World,* and I am glad to make its acquaintance. Many times in the course of travels abroad, I have been impressed with the importance attached to the English language for the purposes of educated people. I have also been impressed with the excellence of the instruction in English that is evidently given in the schools of many countries. All this is very much to the good and I, as a scholar much of whose time goes to wrestling with foreign languages, am only one of many who wish with all our hearts that there could again be a *lingua franca.* We cannot doubt that if such there were it would aid in furthering understanding among different peoples. English seems to be peculiarly well fitted to fill the role and I think that anything you can do to encourage its spread is all to the good.

William L. Langer
Cambridge, Massachusetts

To the Editor:

After reading your Newsletter, *English Around the World,* I feel I should make a few comments on the article you wrote about establishing Swahili as the national language of Kenya.

While it is true that Swahili will be established as the national language, the government has no intention of displacing English. As far as I know, both languages, English and Swahili, will receive equal emphasis in schools and both will be used as media of instruction.

This was the case in the past but recently Swahili began to receive little emphasis in schools. However, within the next four years the government will expect schools and the public to raise the knowledge of Swahili to the same level as English. I hope this makes the position clearer.

E. A. Lang'at
Permanent Mission of Kenya
to the United Nations
New York

We are very grateful to Mr. Lang'at for his clarification.

To the Editor:

During a recent trip to Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in East Africa and to Botswana, former Bechuanaland, in South Africa, I was invited to lunch at the home of an official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. When the car stopped in front of her home two of her children came running out. The girl spoke to me in Swahili, the national language of the country. I bent down to her and said: "Darling, I cannot understand you." She immediately switched to English. She was five and a half years old. I was told later that the boy and girl are both going to an English Medium Kindergarten. To compensate for it, their mother speaks Swahili with them at home. When they enter Primary School, Swahili will be the medium of instruction, but English will continue to be their second language.

On safari through Tanzania Game Reserves and National Parks with my friend and travel companion, we met game wardens, waiters, drivers and shopkeepers, all speaking English as a second language, and speaking it well. A young woman, wife of one of our drivers, with only a primary education, spoke a beautiful flawless English. In Dar-es-Salaam the servants to diplomats from English-speaking countries ask their employers to speak English to them so they can learn the language, while the employers want their servants to speak Swahili so *they* can learn *that* language. A problem only a diplomat can solve!

Signs in Tanzania are often bi-lingual, an easy way for a tourist to pick up some important Swahili words. From a traffic sign I learned "pole-pole" for "slow" and used it effectively in Mombasa, Kenya, when a taxi driver insisted on breaking the sound barrier. He also spoke English but haltingly and, maybe, at that moment for reasons of his own, reluctantly.

Traveling in a launch on the Nile the driver of the boat spoke little or no English; the guide spoke just enough to point out the animals in the water and along the banks, but it took him a long time to understand we had to hurry back to catch our return

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BIBLIOGRAPHY *(from page 6)*

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *(from page 7)*

flight to Kampala.

Nowhere in these three East African countries (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) will the tourist have difficulties if he himself speaks English, especially if he visits the regular tourist attractions. Our travels, however, took us in areas seldom or never visited by tourists. But even in small towns and outlying areas most Africans we met spoke English.

How important and universal English is in this world became quite clear to me in Botswana. The day of my arrival I was attending a cocktail party held by the Government in honor of the Ninth Inter-African Public Administration Seminar. The special guests were high officials from all over the African continent, speaking many different tongues. The language of communication at the party was English.

My travels in Botswana took me deep into the country, six hours by railroad, to the little town of Serowe with one small hotel. The owner, the waiters, the workers coming to the bar for a beer, all spoke English, some very well, some of them not so well, but we always understood each other unless I used a typical American term.

English Around The World as a publication, and its editor, are mostly and understandably concerned with the importance of the English language in the world of today. While I gratefully accepted the fact that English was the medium of communication in the countries I visited, since I could understand and make myself understood, I was much more impressed by the realisation that the peoples of Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Botswana, children and grown-ups, are to an astonishingly large degree bilingual.

Susan M. Fried
New York

Miss Fried's trip was largely in connection with an activity of the English-Speaking Union of the United States which she herself originated, the Commonwealth Schoolbook Fund. The CSF is designed to aid secondary schools in developing Commonwealth countries in Asia, Africa and the West Indies with cash grants ranging from $100 to $300, for the purchase of textbooks and/or library books. These books are selected by the principals and librarians and bought, mostly locally. Copies of the bills are submitted to the Fund. In over 9 years 209 schools with a total of 67,475 students in 15 countries bought 53,667 books for only $41,125 or less than $1. per book. Miss Fried likes to emphasize the fact that money is sent, not the books, thus permitting those on the spot to select the type of book which is most useful. This factor alone makes the Commonwealth Schoolbook Fund unique.

To the Editor:

I noted Mr. Dave Davisson's letter in your November issue regarding the *English in Action* program in New York, and thought perhaps your readers might like to hear about our very unique organization serving more than 5,000 young professionals working or studying temporarily in New York.

Obviously, foreign professional visitors to the USA are helpless without command of our language. A major contribution in this area is being made by hundreds of volunteers who donate their services to the International Center in New York and now handle 400 hours a week of person-to-person English language instruction.

The Center, founded in 1961, is the largest non-profit organization of its type in the United States. We operate on a budget of about $100,000 a year, most of it donated by corporations, foundations and private individuals. We have a salaried staff of only eight persons, and therefore must rely heavily on volunteers for a wide variety of services. Center membership is now about 4,200. In addition, the Center handled, this year, almost 5,000 "Short Term" Visitors to the U.S.—people sent to us for professional programming by the U.S. State Department, by HEW, HUD, The Pentagon and other national agencies. The Center is an affiliate of COSERV, The National Council for Community Services to International Visitors.

English language training is given five days a week, from 9 A.M. to 8 P.M., by the volunteers. Each student gets an hour of instruction a week, sometimes more, depending on the individual's needs.

One of the best aspects of the program is that the teacher is more than just an instructor—he or she becomes a friend and counselor to the foreign student. This close personal relationship helps the pupil learn faster. The teachers, like typical hospitable Americans, quite often have their charges home for dinner, or to social affairs, thus making them feel at home in this country, and sharpening their language skills further by social contact.

A good many notables are among the volunteer instructors, who range in age from their twenties to their seventies. Among them are the grandson of Labor leader Samuel Gompers, Clare Boothe Luce's former secretary, and many members of the very-active Junior League.

Besides this most-important language function, we offer a range of services and diversions in our 5,000-square foot clubroom headquarters at 745 Seventh Avenue, New York City, virtually at the north end of Times Square. These include film showings, Discotheque evenings, "Cafe International" at which talented Center members perform, advice and counsel about life in New York, help in finding a place to live, theater and concert tickets and visits to U.S. homes. For all this, each member pays only $5 a year. We are proud to note that many of our foreign members take out U.S. citizenship, and stay on at the Center to become volunteers and help the new arrivals who enter The Golden Door.

John N. McCormick
Executive Director
The International Center in
New York